The Library of Congress'

EARLY STATE RECORDS PROJECT

converted from the original microfilm held by the
Vincent C. Immel Law Library, Saint Louis University

through the generous support of a grant from the

Council on Library and Information Resources

REPORT

OF THE

COMMISSION IN CHARGE

AND

SUPERINTENDENT

OF THE

SCHOOL FOR THE

Education of the Blind.

EIGHTH REGULAR SESSION---1874.

SALEM, OREGON:
MART. V. BROWN, STATE PRINTER.
1874.

FIRST

BIENNIAL REPORT

ON THE CONDITION OF THE

SCHOOL FOR THE EDUCATION OF THE BLIND.

To the Honorable,
The Legislative Assembly of
The State of Oregon:

In accordance with the requirements of an Act approved October 24, 1872, entitled "An Act to appropriate money for the education of the Blind of this State, and to provide for the same," the following report is respectfully submitted:

Inasmuch as a Joint Resolution was passed at the session of 1870, designating the Board of School Land Commissioners as a Board of Education to control and manage the school for the education of deaf mutes, it was thought to be the intention of the Legislature in establishing the School for the Blind to place the same under the care of the same Board, the law making the appropriation having been passed and approved before the law creating the Governor, Secretary of State and Superintendent of Public Instruction a Board of Education.

The Board having in charge this school consists of the Governor, Secretary of State and State Treasurer, with the Governor as President and Henry H. Gilfry as Secretary and Financial Agent, to keep the books, buy supplies

and pay the bills on account of said School for the Blind, and the law for its organization and support provides as follows:

"Section 1. There be and is hereby appropriated the sum of four thousand dollars, gold coin, out of any money in the State Treasury not otherwise appropri ted, to be expended for the education of blind persons of this State.

"Sec. 2. That said sums be expended for the purposes aforesaid under the direction of the State Board of Education, and full discretion is hereby given to said Board, or a majority thereof, to rent such buildings, employ such teachers, purchase such books and provide for boarding and lodging the scholars as they deem best to carry out the provisions of this Act; *Provided*, They do not in any case exceed the appropriation herein made.

"Sec. 3. The State Treasurer is hereby authorized and required to pay the said sum of four thousand dollars in coin upon the requisition of the said Board of Education, in the mode and manner provided by law for paying other appropriations.

"Sec. 4. The said Board shall report their official proceedings under this Act to the Legislature at each general or special session."

In order to carry out the provisions of the above law the Board met on February 26, 1873, and adopted the following propositions for the support, care and teaching of the blind, which were also approved by Wm. Nesbitt and wife and Miss Nellie Simpson, who was employed as teacher for this unfortunate class of people:

1. The Board will pay to Wm. Nesbitt and wife the sum of five and a half dollars per week for board, lodging, washing and mending, and general care of pupils of

the Institution for the Blind; said Nesbitt to furnish sufficient house room for the proper instruction of said pupils.

2. The Board will pay Miss Nellie Simpson the sum of thirty ($30) dollars per month for instructing said pupils—she to furnish books for instructing the blind, and the use of a cabinet organ for instruction in Music.

3. The number of pupils for the first six months from date shall not exceed five, and the following twelve months not to exceed seven.

4. Miss Simpson shall give all instruction of every character taught, for the first six months, except what may be required of pupils, after which date the State will furnish a music teacher, not to exceed $300 per annum for services.

5. All moneys paid by pupils for their own board and education shall go to the State fund for the general support of the Institution. Also, all the earnings of the pupils outside of their immediate assistance in conducting the school.

The Board reserve the right and privilege of annulling this contract at any time, and changing the management of said Institution whenever its interests appear to them to require it.

The Board to furnish all necessary medical treatment in case of illness of pupils; also, to furnish beds and bedding to the pupils, which are to be the property of the State.

RULES AND REGULATIONS.

1. It is expected that the pupils, having a knowledge and sense of their duty and privileges, will observe a proper and correct deportment at all times, and cheerfully obey the orders and directions of those to whom the charge of the Institute is entrusted.

2. The pupils must assist each other in their studies, as may be required by the Principal.

3. The pupils must not leave the premises without permission of the Principal.

4. Any pupil who may wish to withdraw from the Institute, must notify the Board of their desire; and if they wish to withdraw because of alleged neglect, or unkind or unjust treatment on the part of any of those having in charge the school, they must make to the Board a statement of said treatment and grounds of complaint.

5. It is expected that the pupils will attend public worship at least once on Sunday, at such place as they or their guardians may prefer.

The Board was very fortunate at the opening of the Institute for the Blind in securing the services of Miss Nellie Simpson, a blind young lady, as teacher. She was thoroughly qualified and took great pride in imparting instruction to the unfortunate class of our fellow beings who have been deprived of the greatest of blessings, the sense of sight.

On the 1st day of December, 1873, Rev. J. H. Babcock was employed as General Superintendent and Seeing Teacher for the school, at a salary of twenty-five dollars per month during the sessions of the school. His report on the opening, progress and general prosperity of the school is herewith submitted.

In January, 1874, Miss Dora Hernandez, a young lady well skilled in music, was employed at a salary of twenty-five dollars per month during the sessions of the Institute, to superintend the Musical Department.

After a careful and complete examination of all the accounts, we are able to report that the pecuniary affairs

of the Institute have been judiciously and economically administered. No moneys have been received from parents, pupils or guardians for the support of the Institution.

The amount of moneys received from the State by warrants drawn upon the Treasurer is as follows:

DATE.	NUMBER OF WARRANT.	AMOUNT.
March 1, 1873	759	$ 100 00
March 1, 1873	810	150 00
July 1, 1873	1,139	500 00
Dec. 20, 1873	1,661	450 00
Jan. 6, 1874	1,680	600 00
March 11 1874	1,827	400 00
April 14, 1874	1,878	400 00
May 23, 1874	1,956	300 00
June 30, 1874	2,074	250 00
	Total,	$ 3,150 00

DISBURSEMENTS HAVE BEEN AS FOLLOWS.

DATE.	TO WHOM PAID.	WHAT FOR.	AMOUNT.
March 1, 1873	Cohn Brothers	Bedding	$ 46 37
March 7, 1873	Will'ette Wool M'f'g Co.	Blankets	44 00
March 7, 1873	Van Wagner & Co.	Bedding	40 00
M'ch 24, 1873	Parmenter & Babcock	Bedsteads	16 50
May 3, 1873	Farrar Brothers	Crockery	3 00
June 4, 1873	H. D. Boon	Blank books	3 00
July 1, 1873	Wm. Nesbitt and wife	Board, etc., of pupils	361 00
July 1, 1873	Miss Nellie Simpson	Salary	122 00
Sept. 1, 1873	C. D. Snyder	Binding	12 50
Sept. 1, 1873	Walter Jackson	Blank book	2 00
Nov. 5, 1873	Van Wagner & Co	Chairs	14 00
Nov. 19, 1873	N. B. Kneass, Jr	Apparatus	29 90
Nov. 19, 1873	Drayage and book		1 25
Nov. 20, 1873	Railroad and steamboat	Freight	3 00
Dec. 20, 1873	H. D. Boon	Piano, stool, etc	400 00
Jan'y 3, 1874	Wm. Nesbitt & wife	Board, etc., of pupils	471 32
Jan'y 3, 1874	Miss Nellie Simpson	Salary	90 00
Feb'y 2, 1874	Miss Dora Herdandez	Salary	25 00
Feb'y 2, 1874	C. D. Snyder	Binding	14 00
Feb. 16, 1874	Walter Jackson	Stationery	11 50
March 2, 1874	John H. Babcock	Salary	75 00
M'ch 11, 1874	Miss Dora Hernandez	Salary	25 00
April 1, 1874	Walter Jackson	Stationery	2 00
April 2, 1874	Wells, Fargo & Co	Expressage	3 00
April 14, 1874	Wm. Nesbitt & wife	Board, etc., of pupils	453 35
April 14, 1874	Miss Nellie Simpson	Salary	90 00
April 14, 1874	N. B. Kneass, Jr	Apparatus	16 65
April 14, 1874	Institution for Blind, Mass	Books	6 84
April 14, 1874	J. H. Babcock	Salary	75 00
April 14, 1874	Miss Dora Hernandez	Salary	25 00
April 14, 1874	Albert Bartsch	Tuning piano	7 00
May 2, 1874	Miss Dora Hernandez	Salary	25 00
June 2, 1874	John H. Babcock	Salary	25 00
June 4, 1874	Wells, Fargo & Co.	Expressage	2 15
June 4, 1874	Miss Dora Hernandez	Salary	25 00
June 30, 1874	Wm. Nesbitt & wife	Board, etc., of pupils	427 80
June 30, 1874	Miss Nellie Simpson	Salary	75 00
June 30, 1874	Miss Dora Hernandez	Salary	20 00
July 13, 1874	Frank Tomlinson	Expenses	5 00
Total			$ 3,094 13

Whole amount received.	$3,150 00
Deduct disbursements, as above	3,094 13
Balance in hand of Board at this date	$ 55 87
Whole amount appropriated by the Act of the Legislature	$4,000 00
Amount drawn	3,150 00
Leaving balance not drawn from Treasury,	850 00
Adding to this the amount in hands of the Board,	55 00
And there is of the appropriation yet unexpended	$905 87

The Board take pleasure in acknowledging the sympathy and interest manifested for the success of the School for the Blind, on the part of many citizens of the State and Salem.

L. F. GROVER,
S. F. CHADWICK, } BOARD.
L. FLEISCHNER,

OFFICE OF BOARD OF SCHOOL LAND COMMISSIONERS,
Salem, Oregon, September 14, 1874.

HENRY H. GILFRY,
Secretary.

REPORT OF THE

SUPERINTENDENT

OF THE

OREGON INSTITUE FOR THE BLIND

FOR 1873 AND 1874.

To the Honorable,

The Board of Education of

The State of Oregon:

No provision was made for educating the blind of this State, at the public expense, until the year 1872. During that year, at the suggestion of Miss Nellie Simpson, a blind young lady, and through the efforts and appeals of the officers of State, and a few other friends, the Legislature was induced to pass an Act, by which the sum of four thousand dollars was appropriated for this purpose, to be expended under the direction of the Board of Education. Acting under the authority conveyed by this Act, the Board made a contract with Mr. and Mrs. Wm. Nesbit for boarding and lodging any pupils that might come, and opened the school on the 26th of February, 1873. Only two pupils were present at the opening, viz., Miss Lewis and Miss Watkins. Miss Simpson was appointed Principal.

This term closed June 26th, 1873. The following pupils were in attendance during the term:

Beverly, Samuel, 15, Aurora.
Brewer, David H., 26, Willow Creek.
Lewis, Louisa Ellen, 32, Corvallis.
Millican, Margaret, 25, Lafayette.
Savage, Blanche, 13, Howell Prairie.
Watkins, Josephine, 12, Baker City.

The second term extended from October 7th, 1873, to June 17th, 1874. The present Superintendent was appointed December, 1873, and Miss Dora Hernandez was appointed Teacher of Music in January, 1874. During this term the pupils were:

Brewer, David H., 27, Ochoco.
Lewis, Louisa Ellen, 33, Corvallis.
Millican, Margaret, 26, Lafayette.
Morgan, Zuritha, 29, Lafayette.
Savage, Blanche, 14, Howell Prairie.
Tomlinson, Frank, 15, Ten Mile.
Walling, Amy, 23, Spring Valley.
Watkins, Josephine, 14, Baker City.

STUDIES.

Instruction has been given in the following branches of study:

Reading, English Grammar, Composition, Writing, History of United States, Geography, Principles of Mathematics, Mental Arithmetic, Cyphering, Pin Type Printing, Vocal and Instrumental Music.

The instruments used are the organ, piano, guitar and violin.

The pupils have also had the reading of Kneass' Monthly Magazine, which is furnished by the Principal.

The female pupils have also been taught various kinds of fancy work and plain sewing.

In this comprehensive course of necessary study the pupils, having been attentive and diligent, have made commendable progress. This was shown, to the great pleasure and satisfaction of the Board, at the examination held by them at the close of the last term. Indeed, some of the visitors at that examination thought that these blind pupils had advanced farther and more thoroughly in their studies than seeing children in the public schools usually do in the same time; an opinion in which I concur.

The credit for this improvement made by the pupils is almost wholly due to the Principal, who had little or no assistance in teaching until the present year, and who has all the time been zealous and faithful in what is to her a labor of love.

MECHANICAL DEPARTMENT.

There has been felt the need of a Mechanical Department in which the pupils may learn the various trades and useful arts, according to the natural bent and ability of each. The blind need to be skilled in industrial pursuits just as much as do those who are blessed with sight; not merely because such employments are means of honorable support, but also because the training and discipline of the head and hand in work are necessary to the proper education of every person. And the blind usually become very skillful in all occupations at which they can labor, and in many even excel those who can see. No greater benefit, therefore, can be conferred upon this class of the children of the commonwealth than that of instruction in the various useful handicrafts.

DEPORTMENT.

The deportment of the pupils has been excellent. They

have made good use of the advantages offered them in the Institute, and have cheerfully complied with its regulations.

HEALTH.

They have also been blessed with general good health. Their slight indispositions have been cured by the watchful care of the matron; and in no case have the services of a physician been required.

STATISTICS AND ESTIMATES.

The number of blind persons in this State mentioned in the census of 1870 is thirty-five, of whom twenty-three were males and twelve were females. Fifteen of these, eight males and seven females, were between the ages of five and thirty. It is known, however, that several were omitted in that census, among whom are two that have attended the Institute. After considerable inquiry, made by the Principal and others, including myself, I think there are at least fifty blind persons residing in this State. It may be fairly estimated that one-half of these are of suitable age to need and profit by such instruction as Institutes for the blind are intended to give; that is, the number for whose education provision ought to be made is at least twenty-five. At this date (August) we know of ten or twelve that wish to attend school; and, doubtless, there would be at least twenty applicants if it were known that they could be received.

GENERAL REMARKS.

It appears, then, that the appropriation made by the last Legislature, although it was not sufficient to teach all the blind in the State, yet has been made a means of

furnishing to some of them the care and instruction which they need. I take it for granted that in these days everybody regards the educating of the blind, at the public expense, as a matter, not of charity, but of right. The principle upon which our common-school system is based is, that it is the duty of the State to educate all the children; that every child has a right to this education. A blind child, of course, shares in this common right; it does not lose this right because it has been Providentially afflicted. There is, therefore, according to our rule, nothing of alms or charity in teaching the blind, at the public cost, any more than there is in teaching those who can see. Rather, their loss of one of the most important of the senses entitles them to additional and peculiar care and instruction, such as may be needed to place them on a level with their fellows in the work of getting a living, and to give them an even start with the rest in the race for honors and rewards. It is merely the demand of simple justice and equity that the blind should be put on a footing, as nearly equal as possible, to that held by the seeing.

As much as this, moreover, is required by sound principles of political economy—the true object of which is to enable and encourage every member of the State to exercise all his faculties in some useful employment, which may both support him and add to the general prosperity. No class, therefore, ought to be made an exception to this manner of treatment. And if the blind were not regarded, as they too often are regarded, as such an exception, but were treated as others are in this particular, they would be led to feel their responsibilities more than some of them now do; they would see that they are not to be helpless drones in the body politic,

but, like their fellows, are under obligation to use all their faculties diligently and to aid in the general advancement.

This is the view which seems to be held by all other civilized nations, and by the several States of our Union, as well as by ourselves. All admit that the blind have an equal right with others to all the advantages of physical and mental training which are furnished by the State.

It is further maintained by all who have had experience in this matter, that special schools are needed for the instruction of this class. It is not possible in the public schools to teach the blind to that degree and extent to which others are easily taught; but, in order to secure to them the common right of all to an education, a special training is required; and, as this cannot be given in every school precinct, to every child in its own home, there must be a general institution which all can attend. Special schools for this class are, accordingly, recognized by all just and wise citizens to be a part of that public work which it is both the interest and duty of the State to perform.

In almost every enlightened State or nation on the earth institutes for educating the blind are honored objects of especial pride and care, for the generous maintenance of which the public money is gladly bestowed. The like good and just work which has been well begun in our young and prosperous commonwealth, will doubtless be faithfully carried on until it shall be brought to a worthy and honorable completion.

Respectfully submitted,

JOHN H. BABCOCK,

Superintendent.